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# REMARKS

AT THE

Funeral of Mrs. Bigelow,

TUESDAY, JULY 11, 1876,

By her former Pastor,

GEORGE MOOAR, D. D.



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Mrs. Ann E. Bigelow, deceased July 9, 1876, was born in Chester, Mass., Jan. 12, 1813. She came of the family of which the well-known Rev. Dr. Nathanael Emmons, of Franklin, was an eminent representative in theology, and Prof. Ebenezer Emmons, in natural science. Her father was a prominent citizen in Chester, and some of his children manifested superior abilities. Mrs. Bigelow was a pupil in the celebrated school for young ladies at Troy, N. Y., Mrs. Emma Willard, the Principal, being her relative. After her first marriage she resided for several years at Princeton, N. J. On her husband's death, she became connected with the Seminary at Troy, acting as private secretary to the Principal, at that time Mrs. John H. Willard. Twenty-nine years ago, June 3, 1847, she was married to Mr. T. B. Bigelow. Her home for the most part was at Troy, or Cambridgeport, Mass., until fourteen years ago, when



she came to San Francisco, and soon after to Oakland.

Her ancestry, education, associations and society have been favorable, therefore, for character, culture and refinement. Of her early religious history I have no details: but among the influences which affected her may be mentioned several of those on whose ministrations in the pulpit she was wont to attend; for the ministry of the word was with her a pleasure and a power. At Troy, two of her pastors were Rev. W. D. Snodgrass, D. D., and Rev. N. S. S. Beman, D. D.; at Cambridgeport, she listened to Rev. W. A. Stearns, D. D., lately president of Amherst College; during her residence at Princeton, she often heard Drs. Miller and Alexander and Dr. James W. Alexander, and used to recall her delight in the speech of those noted divines. All but one of those clergymen passed away before her; so had many others who had enriched her life. "I have more friends in heaven" she said to me, "than I have on earth."

As respects herself, those who knew her will see her look of remonstrance lest anything be said here in the way of eulogy; it might seem to pain her now to be spoken of at all in this public place. To call her name in any meeting used to appear so unnecessary, if not so out of taste, that standing in this

place, in sight of the familiar seat, whence she used to look toward this pulpit, it is difficult for me to speak the words of sincere esteem and friendship without a kind of self-reproach. For Mrs. Bigelow shrank from publicity and display; she was by nature timid, "the most timid person" so her household say, "we ever knew." Body and spirit both shrank, like a sensitive plant, instantly and at the slightest touch, from all prominence; she cared not to be conspicuous in any circle; her manners, bearing, dress, conversation, were simple and unostentatious. Yet I could never see that this timidity and shrinking covered or nursed any of that selfishness which busies itself with its own fears, retires to its favorite retreats and pursuits, and excuses itself from duty. On the contrary, she was thoughtful for others; even in the extreme prostration of the last few weeks, more anxious for others than for herself, and not unfrequently took upon her services and responsibilities which to her natural feeling must have been really oppressive. If the flesh were weak, the spirit was so willing that she continued, though fearful, to watch with her Master.

This timidity was allied with self-distrust. Her moral nature was as sensitive as her physical; her judgment of right and wrong was clear; the movement of her conscience

was as fine and true as that of her hand in writing. The first note we received from her pen struck us with admiration; nothing misshapen, or ungraceful or indistinct. In like manner the law of righteousness was written clear on the tablet of her mind; it was written with its finer shadings as well as in its strong and deeper lines; therefore it was difficult for her to suppose she had met the requirements of that law. Her prevailing feeling was "I have come short." This feeling kept her lowly; transports were not hers; more assurance she would have liked, sometimes she longed for it; perfection was not in the compass of her expectations. It was her hope that her self-distrust would give place to more of triumph in her Saviour; such was the prayer, too, of her friends. This hope was in a kindly manner realized. Ten days before she died, she ventured to say: "I think I am safe." The last distinct words her husband heard were in a firmer tone. "I want you to commend yourself to the Lord, Jesus Christ," he said, when friends could do no more for her: "I do, I do," was the answer, not "I think I do," nor, "I hope I do," but, "I do, I do."

But neither this timidity, nor this self-distrust interfered with intellectual vivacity or lessened her enjoyment in life. Indeed, did they not add a certain delicate quality



to both? She appreciated keenly good books; took delight in the recorded thoughts and lives of the good and great; her memory retained the wealth of the best christian song. "My life has been very pleasant to me," she would say. So pleasant was it that she clung to it even through these four years of suffering. She was even mirthful. Those who saw her only at a distance would hardly believe that so many queer and quaint stories, odd and out-of-the-way pleasantries could linger in her recollection, and, on occasion, be brought forth for the pleasure of her friends. But the pleasure she took and gave was deeper than laughter; it was the happiness of one who saw so much that is beautiful and wonderful in this world, the joy of one who possessed and cherished a benevolent and christian spirit.

Surely it cannot do harm, it must be right to say what is only the simple truth, that in all the relations of life Mrs. Bigelow added to the sum of human happiness. Did she ever lessen that sum? Many of us make contributions of various sorts to the world's welfare. But we take away also not a little. It tasks me to recollect any way in which our sister used to diminish or interfere with the good of those about her. "She was so pure and clean in her whole nature" one good friend said, on the


first expressed recollection of her as passed away. He who knows her best and is most competent to affirm, says: "She was a model wife and a model step-mother." Her neighbors miss her quiet and friendly ways. The more intimate circle of those christian friends, who have been drawn to her during these fourteen years of her Oakland life, will count her memory as among the more precious treasures of their experience. How constant she used to be at all the stated services of church, sunday school, prayer meeting, women's prayer circle, missionary concert and the missionary society. I used to feel that whoever else might fail to appreciate the words I spoke here, few of those words would escape her attention or be altogether fruitless in her character.

One subject deserves chief mention here. That is her early, increasing and intense interest in the Woman's Board of Missions. The missionary society formed in this church was, as far as I know, the first of the kind on this Coast; she was one of the small number who formed it, and was its first president. As the work came before the whole body of our churches, she was chosen one of the secretaries of the "Woman's Board for the Pacific." Her judgment in the conduct of its affairs was excellent; her knowledge of the work at large was superior; her whole



nature became quick with quiet zeal for its furtherance. In nothing concerning her Lord's Kingdom was she ever so much interested; she wanted to live longer to cooperate with it. During all her sickness, her contributions went in an unobserved but liberal manner to its treasury. On Monday last, when the Board met, her mind was much occupied with thinking of it and for it. On Friday, despite the great exhaustion, she inquired if the PACIFIC had come, that she might again listen to what was written in its weekly missionary column. None may know how much this love for a noble and most worthy work helped this woman to bear the one form of suffering, which probably of all forms of sickness she dreaded most, and which seemed somehow to us all the one strange element mingled in the cup which Providence gave her to drink.

Perhaps she will forgive me for having called her name in this public service with even this restrained tribute to her memory, if you who hear me shall take this special work which she loved—indeed all the work of christian disciples—more warmly into your hearts. May your meat also, like her Master's, be to do the will of your Father, and finish his work. How certainly the Bread which came down from heaven will be your everlasting life.



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